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The Development of English Thought ; A Study in the Economic Interpretation of History. BY SIMON N. PATTEN, Ph.D., Professor of Political Economy, Wharton School of Finance and Economy, University of Pennsylvania. (New York : The Macmillan Co. 1899. Pp. xxvii, 415.)

DR. PATTEN has written a book stimulating alike to the student of sociology, political science, history, and psychology, for it touches at certain points each of these subjects. To no one, however, will it be more interesting than to the student of history, who will rise from its perusal uncertain whether to be more exasperated by its dogmatic interpretation of familiar historical events and movements than delighted with its insight into the working of historical forces, and its singularly concise and pithy way of saying things. No one can read the work without acquiring added mental strength and new points of view, and whether the reader like it or not, he will probably look at some things in history differently from before.

What Dr. Patten has given us is not so much a history of the development of English thought as it is a theory and law of progress in history, a philosophy of history from psychical and economic standpoints, and a series of speculations upon the environmental conditions that have influenced the development of certain aspects of English philosophic and economic thought from Hobbes to Darwin.

The fundamental thesis of the book is this, that to understand the development of English thought it is necessary to understand the economic conditions that have influenced the thinkers—not only those conditions that have been contemporaneous, but those that have gone before and have shaped the national character. By character Dr. Patton means the motor reactions that have been inherited from past generations, the conservative forces that have never been able to adjust themselves completely at any given time to the rapidly changing environment or economy. This economy Dr. Patten defines as composed of all the objects which modify, through the sensory powers, the old motor-reactions, the definite objects and forces (both tangible and intangible, ideals as well as food supply and national goods), which at a given time are the requisites for survival and which are capable of bringing about readjustment of the organism to its environment. Progress is caused, therefore, says Dr. Patten, by “the interplay of the character-forces in men and the economic-forces in their environment.”

With this as his premise Dr. Patten's object is threefold. First he attempts to give a new classification of society, substituting for upper, middle, and lower classes, for conservatives and liberals, for landlords, capitalists, and laborers, a division based on psychic peculiarities into clingers, sensualists, stalwarts, and mugwumps, a classification, it may be said at once, suggestive and valuable. Secondly he rearranges the stages in the history of thought, placing the economic stage first, the aesthetic second, and the moral and religious stages third and fourth. In this con-

nection Dr. Patten demands that history be studied in epochs, and that the study of each epoch take into account contemporary economic, aesthetic, moral and religious influences in succession before examining the corresponding influences of an earlier epoch. And finally our author offers a new interpretation of the history of thought. He starts with the premise that "the economic conditions are the primary source from which all elements of the national character arise," that is, that all original motor-reactions were shaped in earlier times in a local environment and a pain economy; and then recognizing the transforming and modifying influences of new environments and new conditions other than economic which have remodelled old types and developed new ones, he finds in this progressive movement the constant recurrence of two intellectual classes, one of which, the philosophers (moralists or prophets, which he later and better calls speculators or thinkers) represents the old types, the other, the economists (whom he later and better calls the observers) standing for the new. To the tendency of the philosopher to become an observer and the observer to become a philosopher Dr. Patten ascribes the forward movement in thought.

The remainder and the greater part of the work treats of the enlargement of these propositions and their application in history. It is impossible in the space here at command to consider even in brief Dr. Patten's conclusions. No student of Continental or English history will fail to study Dr. Patten's book, unless he is hide-bound by the conception that history is mere narrative and that the function of the historian is to state facts and not to interpret them, or is so taken up with his love of method that he has neither time nor inclination to cultivate ideas. He will probably disagree with Dr. Patten over and over again in his conclusions, for the latter makes no attempt to prove his assumptions, and rarely illustrates his generalizations by an appeal to facts. His attitude is that of one who could readily prove his statements if he wished to do so, but who thinks that they are so self-evident that it is not worth while.

But all of Dr. Patten's conclusions are by no means self-evident. I should like to ask Dr. Patten to prove the following statements: that the English owe more of their characteristics to the Shemite than the Greek, and that the Church was shaped by Roman and Shemite ideas only; that *all* the migrating Germans were lost or blended with all the people they conquered; that the *Völkerwanderung* was actuated by greed only, and not by starvation as well; that the bishops of Rome avoided *all* theological controversy; that northern Europe before the sixth century was a dreary waste in which "a few half-starved people were huddled in miserable hovels"; that monastic colonies were never under strict rules; that the Church elevated the position of women; that there ever was a German Emperor in the Middle Ages; that the leaders of the Renaissance sought to reform the abuses of the Church; that Calvinism spread only where guilds and clans were dominant; that Germany has had a steady development running through many ages while Europe passed "suddenly from barbarism to social security and prosperity"; that Eng-

lish society before the Reformation was half as bad as he makes it out to be ; that the Puritans were bound to disappear because of their economic shortcomings and died like sheep of consumption ; that the "craze for agricultural improvement" in the eighteenth century was due to the monotony of country life ; that "history has seldom risen above a chronicle of wars and disasters" ; that historians do not know that discontent not poverty causes progress ; and that "all great writers are lazy." Yet we are asked to accept each of these and scores of others on Dr. Patten's *ipse dixit*.

Dr. Patten's book is full of original comments and suggestive interpretations that will be willingly considered by every historical scholar. Two general conclusions, however, present themselves ; first, that Dr. Patten has unconsciously shaped his interpretation of history according to the theory that he has framed, has selected those phases of history and those views on debateable points that were most useful for his purpose, and has too frequently generalized from insufficient data ; and secondly, that in the application of his theory he has narrowed his definition of environment, and has exaggerated the importance of single economic factors, such as woollen clothes, the oven, the bath-tub, wheat, sugar, steady employment and three meals a day, and in so doing has filled his interpretation of history with a spirit of economic and psychic fatalism. In this day and generation, when the historian is beginning to recognize that no great event in history can be traced to a single cause, no matter how important that cause may be, it will not be deemed sufficient to offer such simple explanations as those with which Dr. Patten is content. The historian is not ready to give up the influence of individuals in history and to see his faith, his creed, his ideals, his art, and his literature merely the outcome of an economic surplus, the result of a new invention or of the introduction of a new element in the food supply. And that which is true of the economic interpretation is also true of the psychic ; prayer is more than a motor collapse, praise more than a motor outburst, the truth of doctrines and creeds more than a mere test as to whether a further development of the sensory powers is of greater social value than the further growth of the motor powers. Dr. Patten has given us throughout his work a series of explanations which are frequently sound and true, but which are in reality only a part of the great truth of history. The value of his work lies in the fact that the explanations he advances have never perhaps been so lucidly or convincingly presented before.

CHARLES M. ANDREWS.

Cosimo de' Medici. By K. DOROTHEA EWART, late Scholar of Somerville College, Oxford. ["Foreign Statesmen."] (London and New York : The Macmillan Co. 1899. Pp. viii, 240.)

THIS latest volume of the Foreign Statesmen series can hardly be ranked among the best of the collection. There is labor, patience, and, on the whole, a good arrangement of very complex material, but the en-